



Customer No. 26874
PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE
Attorney Docket: END909.0511036

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Frederick E. Shelton IV : Paper No:
Serial No. 10/615,974 : Group Art Unit: 3721
Filed: July 9, 2003 : Examiner:
For: Surgical Stapling Instrument Incorporating a Tapered Firing Bar for Increased Flexibility Around the Articulation Joint

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §§1.97 and 1.98, Applicant herewith submits certain information, which the Patent & Trademark Office may wish to consider in examining the above-identified application. The information is listed below, and is also listed on the attached form PTO-1449.

| <u>REFERENCES</u> | <u>INVENTOR</u> | <u>ISSUE DATE</u> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| US 6,644,532 | Green et al. | 11/11/2003 |
| US 2004/0050902 | Green et al. | 03/18/2004 |

Pursuant to the waiver published in the Pre-OG Notice, dated July 11, 2003, no copies are provided herewith of U.S. patents cited. No representation is made or intended that a prior art search has been made or that no better art than the listed is available. It is respectfully requested that the information be considered by the Examiner and made of record in the present application.

Applicant believes that no fees are due. However, if it is determined that a fee is due, the Commissioner for Patents is authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment of fees to the Frost Brown Todd LLC Deposit Account No. 06-2226.

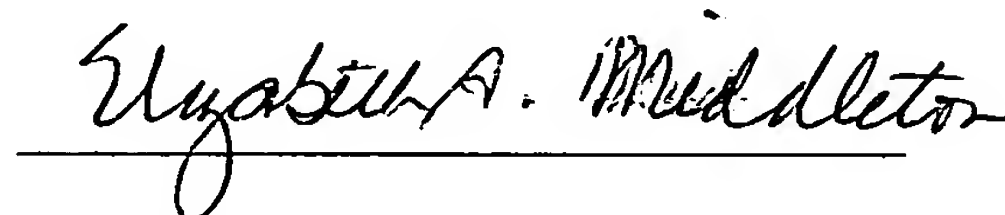
Respectfully submitted,

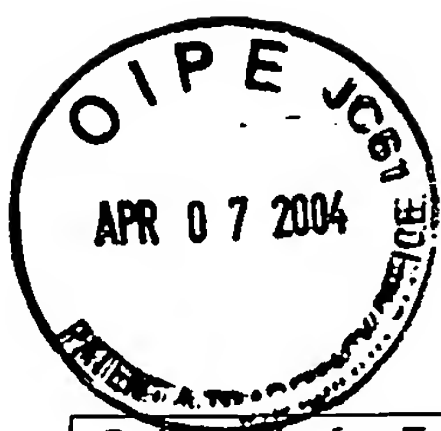


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that a copy of this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 this 5th day of April, 2004.





Customer No. 26874
PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Substitute for Form PTO 1449

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**

(use as many sheets as necessary)

Complete if Known

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|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Application No. | 10/615,974 |
| Filing Date | July 9, 2003 |
| First Named Inventor | Frederick E. Shelton IV |
| Art Unit | 3721 |
| Examiner Name | |

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| Sheet | 1 | of | 1 | Attorney Docket No. | END909.0511036 |
|-------|---|----|---|---------------------|----------------|

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

| Examiner initials | Cite No. | DOCUMENT NUMBER | Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY | Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document | Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear |
|----------------------|-------------|--|--------------------------------|--|---|
| | | Number-Kind code ² (if known) | | | |
| | | US- 6,644,532 | 11-11-2003 | Green et al. | |
| | | US- 2004/0050902 | 03-18-2004 | Green et al. | |
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FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

| Examiner initials | Cite No. | Foreign Patent Document | Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY | Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document | Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear | T ⁶ |
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OTHER PRIOR ART – NON PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS

| Examiner initials | Cite No. | Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), date, page(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published | T ⁶ |
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EXAMINER SIGNATURE _____ DATE CONSIDERED _____

EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ Applicant's unique citation designation number (optional). ² See Kinds Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.uspto.gov or MPEP 901.04. ³ Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST. 3). ⁴ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁵ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST. 16 if possible. ⁶ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.